

Editor's Report for 1992 — Papers Published in 1991

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This is my final report as Editor of *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology*. I am pleased to report that 1991 has been an outstanding year for the journal in every way, and that the major aspects of the plan that I presented for the Journal in 1986 have been largely accomplished.

The publication statistics for the past six years are presented in Table I. Since 1987, the submission of original reports has been stable at about 500. Since 1989, through the combination of supplement issues and regular manuscripts, we have been able to increase the total journal pages from the 1500-page level to the 2200-page level. I anticipate that 2100–2200 pages will be the stable size of the JID in the future, including a healthy balance of regular manuscripts, abstracts, and supplement issues.

The number of pages published as original reports in 1991 was significantly increased. This was not due to an increase in acceptance rate, but was due to several factors. We started 1991 with a backlog of papers from 1990 due to two supplement issues late in the year. We greatly increased the number of High Impact papers published, and this cohort moved very quickly from submission to publication. We invested considerable resources in shortening time to publication in 1990 and 1991, cutting nearly a month from the average time from submission to publication in 1991. This was accomplished by shortening the time in later stages of review and revision. The papers published in the JID are also becoming longer and more complex. We eliminated any backlog in 1991, entering 1992 with no papers in reserve. With the new contract arrangement with our publisher and income from the Endowment Fund, we were able to achieve these increases in the size of the Journal and also increase profits to meet and exceed our goal for 1991.

The Profile of Publications in 1991 (Table II) shows an increase in High Impact manuscripts, in Rapid Communications, and in Letters to the Editor. This is a healthy trend to diversify the various ways of transmitting information: exciting papers using cutting-edge techniques; preliminary reports demonstrating new findings; and dialogue in letters on controversies in cutaneous biology.

Table III indicates the fate of submission of papers submitted in 1991. Over the past three years, the level of papers eventually accepted in the JID has been stable at 57–60%. To achieve this high level of acceptance and to maintain the quality of the Journal, the Editorial Board has found it essential to insist on extensive revisions, improvements, and new experiments in many manuscripts. This is time consuming and often produces delays before acceptance and publication. However, it is absolutely essential in maintaining the quality of the Journal. One of my primary goals has been to maintain the Journal's status as an accessible forum for publication of the best science in cutaneous biology.

The JID continues to be international in its scope, as seen in Table IV. In this tabulation, multi-national manuscripts were attributed as fractions to the author nations.

The Duration of Review (Table V) in 1991 was largely unchanged. High Impact manuscripts receive rapid and thorough review, and this has not impeded the handling of papers in Standard Review in any way. The time of papers in the hands of the Associate Editors includes one mailing, and is not the time in review alone. The reviewers and Associate Editors of the Journal have continued

to maintain their excellent performance in review. Over the past several years, we have had an increasing problem with manuscripts returned "unreviewed." In 1991, we diminished this number by one-third, largely through increased use of calling reviewers of manuscripts (especially High Impact manuscripts) before sending out reviews (Table VI).

My objectives as Editor have largely been accomplished through the diligent efforts of the Editorial Board, reviewers, and authors of the JID. My first objective was to involve more fully the ESDR in every level of Journal activity. Accomplishing this has greatly increased our use of international reviewers in Europe, and also on the Pacific Rim. I placed high value on enhancing the quality of communications with authors, and this produced better manuscripts with less delay. I have insisted that the revision process be reasonable but extensive. This has allowed us to maintain a high acceptance rate, to maintain reasonable accessibility, but also to retain quality. To enhance the variety of the Journal, I have aggressively enlisted supplement issues in addition to the Annual Symposium on the Biology of Skin. I feel that supplements are absolutely essential to expand the impact of the Journal and of cutaneous biology. However, the first priority for supplements should be scientific merit. Supplements can also be profitable, but this must be a secondary consideration. I also proposed a greater involvement of the Editorial Board in providing "quality control" of primary reviews. This has greatly enhanced the quality of our reviews, the specific requests for revision, and the quality of the final papers. It has also allowed us to provide broad expertise in the review of all manuscripts across the entire spectrum of cutaneous biology.

Two features introduced during the later part of my editorial tenure are also worthy of note. In 1989 the Goals Committee proposed ways of increasing the involvement of basic scientists, Ph.D. investigators, and investigators from industry in the Society. Although the SID did not accept the recommendations of the committee, our Editorial Board did. We doubled the size of the Editorial Board, and included more Ph.D. scientists, representatives from industry, more ESDR members, and a broader range of disciplines. We hoped to attract papers in important new areas of biology. To further increase the impetus for scientists to submit their best work to the Journal, we introduced the High Impact manuscript. These papers, reviewed in one month or less and published in 4 months if no revisions are necessary, are a successful demonstration that committing Editorial Office resources to more rapid review (for the right papers) can be successful.

Our Editorial Board has also found ways to support research initiatives in Epidermolysis Bullosa, Alopecia Areata, and Psoriasis supported by the National Institutes of Health and by Research Foundations. I feel that it is important for the Journal to support dissemination of such information whenever possible.

There are two issues that I would like to discuss very briefly. First, I would like to remind our large group of JID reviewers that it is they who determine the quality and timeliness of the review process. Detailed, insightful, and timely reviews are absolutely essential in maintaining the standard of the review process. Decisions on manuscripts are not an individual decision by the Editor, but represent a **consensus** of opinion among experts in the field and members of the Editorial Board. It is **you** who set the standards in the

Table I. JID Publication Statistics 1986–1990

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Original reports submitted	438	503	501	488	524	514
Original reports published	253	235	239	254	236	323
Supplement articles		12		62	84	34
Editorial pages	1388	1324	1405	1455	1455	1995
Supplement pages		72		455	412	100
Abstract pages	192	105	143	247	157	187
Total pages	1580	1501	1548	2157	2024	2282

Table II. Profile of Publications

	1989	1990	1991
Standard reports	244	222	250
High Impact papers	—	3	46
Rapid Communications	10	14	24
Review articles	1	—	2
Supplement articles	62	88	34
Editorials	1	3	1
Letters to the Editor	19	14	27
Book reviews	7	5	7

Table III. Fate of Submissions

	1989	1990	1991
Submitted	488	524	514
Accept, revise, re-review, re-submit	293 (60%)	305 (58%)	292 (57%)
Reject	195 (40%)	219 (42%)	222 (43%)

Table IV. Geographic Origin of Submissions

	1989	1990	1991
USA	200	184	238
Japan	75	64	70
United Kingdom	45	41	37
Germany	38	63	34
France	29	37	28
Austria	14	12	15
Italy	12	18	8
Netherlands	12	16	17
Canada	9	9	7
Denmark	9	11	8
Sweden	7	10	4
Switzerland	5	10	6
Spain	—	5	2
Finland	4	8	5
Norway	4	1	1
Australia	3	12	9
Belgium	3	5	2
Republic of China	2	3	4
Egypt	2	—	—
Hungary	2	—	1
India	2	3	3
Iceland	3	—	2
Mexico	2	—	—
Poland	—	2	2
Yugoslavia	—	2	1
Israel	2	2	2
Brazil	1	1	—
Hong Kong	1	—	—
Korea	1	1	1
Greece	—	1	2
Russia	—	1	1
Nigeria	—	1	—
Czechoslovakia	1	1	—
New Zealand	—	—	1
Venezuela	—	—	1
South Africa	—	—	1
Bulgaria	—	—	1

review process. Secondly, I have been frequently informed of failures in proper citation of references. It is the intellectual and ethical obligation of authors to cite the work of their predecessors that lit the way for their own progress. Results from prior publications should be cited factually and accurately. The intellectual and factual basis for your own results are an essential component of a complete manuscript.

After five years as *JID* Editor I feel that I have been truly fortunate in working with the Editorial Board, reviewers, and authors of the Journal. I have experienced very few unpleasant moments from the authors, who genuinely appreciate the efforts of the Editorial Board in helping to improve their manuscripts. Our larger and more diverse group of reviewers has been competent and professional; those who were not were exiled from the data base. The Editorial Board is the most conscientious and competent group of scientists with whom I have had the honor of working. Their services are not financially rewarded, but their effort and wisdom have been essential in providing direction for this Journal, and quality in the reviews and revised manuscripts. They have been essential in shaping Editorial and Publication policy. I want to thank Klaus Wolff, the Chief Associate Editor for the ESDR, for his liaison between my office and the ESDR Board of Directors and members. Bill Weston, Clark Huff, and Lela Lee, my Chief Associate Editors in Denver, have all shouldered the burdens of producing this Journal with great skill, and the results of their efforts are evident in the product.

I also want to thank the Boards of Directors of the Society for Investigative Dermatology and the European Society for Dermatological Research for their financial support and direction for the past five years. I am indebted to Ervin Epstein, SID Secretary-Treasurer

Table V. Duration of Review

	Time in Review (Days)					Total
	Review 1	Review 2	Review 3	Associate Editor	Editor	
Standard Review						
1987	36	35		13	6	70
1988	35	36		14	6	66
1989	35	34		12	6	61
1990	37	35		12	6	64
1991	39	36		13	6	66
Third reviewer required						
1987	32	34	30	15	5	92
1988	27	30	30	14	6	80
1989	30	31	30	13	6	79
1990	28	28	33	14	6	81
1991	24	28	32	10	7	76
Rapid com- munication						
1987	21	18			7	43
1988	22	26			6	43
1989	29	25			5	47
1990	26	28			6	44
1991	26	27			5	41
High impact						
1990	12	17			4	28
1991	15	16			6	29

Table VI. Manuscripts Returned "Unreviewed"

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Total reports	505	502	487	524	514
Manuscripts "unreviewed"	122	138	165	161	117

when I became editor, for giving me the opportunity to expand the size and scope of the *JID* to the maximum extent of our resources by publishing a memorable Fiftieth Anniversary Issue. David Bickers, the current Secretary-Treasurer, has always supported my goals for

the Journal with the resources to get the job done. As a member of my Editorial Board he has always supported approaches to improve the quality and impact of the Journal.

It is an appropriate time to transfer direction of the *JID* to Edward J. O'Keefe at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Ed has been one of the most effective members of my Editorial Board, and is an excellent scientist and cell biologist. His opinions are reasoned, knowledgeable, and fair. He has a very capable and widely experienced group of Chief Associate Editors, and will select a large diverse international Editorial Board. I am confident in his ability to continue the course of the *JID*. I complete my tenure as *JID* editor with a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.